



## Water Conservation Ideas For Restaurants

Water conservation is great for the environment  
and your business's bottom line!

No cost, low cost and technological opportunities abound for using water efficiently for the food service sector. Water-efficiency measures at restaurants can lower your water and energy bills as well as improve operations. We can all do our part to improve water quality, and preserve aquatic ecosystems and our drinking water resources through behavioral and operational changes. Demonstrating your commitment to water conservation will make a positive impression on your staff and customers. Some of the measures listed below can be applied to your restaurant.

### Building Maintenance

- Repair dripping or leaky faucets, sprayers
- Don't leave faucets unattended and running.
- Check water supply system for leaks and turn off any unnecessary flows.
- Repair running toilets.
- As appliances or fixtures wear out, replace them with water-efficient models.
- Keep hot water pipes insulated.
- Avoid excessive boiler and air conditioner blow down. Monitor total dissolved solids levels and blow down only when needed.
- Minimize the water used in cooling equipment, such as air compressors, in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations.
- Switch from wet or steam carpet cleaning methods to dry powder methods.
- Change window cleaning schedule from periodic to an on-call/as required basis.
- Shut off air conditioning when and where it is not needed to reduce the load on equipment.



### General Suggestions

- Read the water bill or meter monthly to monitor usage and water conservation results.
- Ask for employee suggestions on water conservation.
- When cleaning with water is necessary, use budgeted amounts.
- Train staff to practice water conservation.
- Evaluate the quantity and purpose of water being used.
- Serve water only when requested by customer.



### Kitchen Areas

- Turn off the continuous flow used to clean coffee/milk/soda beverage island drain trays; clean the trays only as needed.
- Wash full loads only and turn dishwasher off when not in use.
- Replace spray heads in dishwasher to reduce water flow.
- Use water from steam tables to wash down cooking areas.
- Plan ahead and thaw foods in the cooler instead of using running water.
- Do not use running water to melt ice.
- Recycle water where feasible, consistent with state and county requirements.
- Recycle rinse water from the dishwasher or recirculate it to the garbage disposal.

- Rinse utensils and dishes in a basin rather than with running water.

## Exterior Areas

- Limit lawn areas and consider xeriscaping – water-conserving landscape design.
- Avoid plant fertilizing and pruning that would stimulate excessive growth.
- Remove weeds and unhealthy plants so remaining plants can benefit from the water saved.
- Water landscapes only when needed; one inch of water per week is enough to sustain established lawns.
- In many cases, older, established plants require only infrequent irrigation. Look for indications of water need, such as wilting, change of color, or dry soils.
- Time watering to occur in the early morning or evening when evaporation is lowest.
- Remove thatch and aerate turf to encourage the movement of water to the root zone.
- Avoid runoff and make sure sprinklers cover just the lawn, not sidewalks, or paved areas.
- Do not water on windy, rainy, or very hot days.
- Irrigation equipment should apply water uniformly.
- Investigate the advantages of installing drip irrigation systems.
- Mulch around plants to reduce evaporation and discourage weeds.
- Never hose down sidewalks, driveways, or parking lots as pollutants can run into the stormdrain and our fresh waterways.



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection  
[www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/subject/hotopics/drought/facts/restnt.htm](http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/subject/hotopics/drought/facts/restnt.htm)